

**Executive Host Information 2005  
Placement Week November 15-19, 2004**

Office Name: Center for Operational Oceanographic Products and Services (CO-OPS)

Position Title: Science Policy Assistant

How many total staff are in your immediate office / branch? (Select one option, mark with X)

1-5	
6-10	
> 10	x

Have you previously hosted a Sea Grant fellow (Select one option, mark with X)

Yes	
No	x

However, one of our Oceanographers was a Knauss Sea Grant Fellow in 2003.

If yes, how many?

Does your office accept non-United States (foreign) citizens? (Select one option, mark with X)

Yes	x
No	

**Organizational Overview**

***Mission Statement:*** (Please limit to 30 words.)

The Center for Operational Oceanographic Products and Services (CO-OPS) collects and distributes observations and predictions of water levels and currents to ensure safe, efficient and environmentally sound maritime commerce.

***Brief Overview of Your Office's work:*** (Please limit to 150 words.)

As indicated by its name, CO-OPS conducts operational oceanography, primarily through 3 programs; the National Water Level Program, the National Current Program, and a national network of Physical Oceanographic Real-Time Systems (PORTS) in major U.S. harbors. Management of these programs has positioned CO-OPS to play a critical role in the formation of the Integrated Ocean Observing System (IOOS). In particular, the National Water Level Observation Network is recognized as a high priority and national backbone for IOOS. CO-OPS is actively working with the National Federation of Regional Associations to help maintain standards when installing and operating ocean observing systems consisting of water level and current measurements.

CO-OPS data and products not only support safe marine navigation but are required by the National Weather Service to meet its flood and tsunami warning responsibilities. The Center also manages a Coastal Oceanographic Applications and Services of Tides and Lakes (COASTAL) Program to address the non-navigation applications and services of water level and datum information. These additional uses include beneficial use of dredged material, coastal planning projects, marsh restoration projects, long-term sea level change assessments, storm surge monitoring and emergency preparedness, and enhancing new technologies. CO-OPS also operates oceanographic forecast models which accurately nowcast and forecast oceanographic conditions 30 hours in advance.

Do you have partnership projects, multi-agency workgroups, or working relationships with other offices? Please list.

Many of our projects are in partnership with other National Ocean Service (NOS) offices such as Office of Coast Survey; Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management; National Geodetic Survey; Communication and Education Division; National Estuarine Research Reserves; and Coastal Services Center. Our partnerships with other NOAA line offices include National Weather Service; and National Environmental Satellite, Data, and Information Service.
We have several non-NOAA partners that include State Coastal Zone Managers, aquaria (Baltimore, San Francisco), and universities.
We work with Ocean.US on IOOS related tasks.
We work closely with other federal agencies involved in the Marine Transportation System such as the Army Corps of Engineers, the US Coast Guard as well as US Geological Survey and NASA.

**Assignment Description.**

*It is understood that the fellow's specific responsibilities will be tailored to his / her unique skills and interests. Please articulate probable assignments and duties and the education / professional development that these tasks will bring to the fellow.*

Estimated Fellow Travel, Out-of-Office: (Select one option, mark with X)

0 days / month	
1-3 days / month	x
4-7 days / month	
8-10 days / month	
> 2 weeks / month	

Estimated DC-Area Travel: (Select one option, mark with X)

0 days / month	
1-3 days / month	x
4-7 days / month	
8-10 days / month	
> 2 weeks / month	

Does this position require mandatory skills: (Select one option, mark with X)

Yes	
No	x

Desired Background Skills: Please list. (e.g. strong written / communication skills, knowledge of Microsoft PowerPoint software, etc.).

Strong communication and writing ability
Strong analytic skills
Knowledge of the Integrated Ocean Observing System
It is not necessary that the Fellow have a complete understanding of physical oceanography
Interest in Outreach and Education

In 300 words or less, please describe the tasks, duties, or projects the fellow will undertake, the skills a fellow will gain, and the deliverables a fellow can expect to produce from completing these tasks.

The Fellow will work directly with and support the Director of CO-OPS, who holds a number of key positions on, or is active in, NOAA observing system committees and councils as well as external groups such as OCEAN.US and regional observing systems. We envision the Fellow working with CO-OPS scientists, engineers, and staff to create an IOOS Policy for CO-OPS involvement in the Integrated Ocean Observing System. The Senate has recommended that NOS be the IOOS lead for FY05 in the budget mark-up. CO-OPS currently has one of the backbone structures needed to sustain the IOOS through its National Water Level Observation Network. The policy would consist of several items including a certification process by which IOOS Regional Associations meet NOS standards for water level and currents data collection and processing. A second item would be a Regional Water Level Network Data Dissemination Policy and Certification Process. Currently, CO-OPS has policy for the NWLON, but is in the process of creating such a policy for IOOS water level stations that may not be part of the NWLON. The data dissemination policy will make clear how to treat water level data from non-CO-OPS water level stations and indicate the process necessary to certify organizations that provide water level data or products to CO-OPS as part of the National Water Level Data Assembly Center. The document will specify how to interact with the National Data Buoy Center (NDBC) as another IOOS "Data Assembly Center". CO-OPS and NDBC each assemble their own data for inclusion in IOOS, and policy needs to be written to organize and instruct each office as to the standards and requirement drivers necessary for success, and to make dataflows seamless and integrated for our customers.

The Fellow might attend several meetings internal to NOAA, as well as meetings that Regional Associations might hold.

In addition to creating the policies noted above, the Fellow would help create an outreach document for IOOS, perhaps in conjunction with Sea Grant. Many Regional Associations do not understand the importance of water level and current monitoring, or the multiple products that can be derived, and the creation of a one to multiple page deliverable would be crucial to gain support for the inclusion of water levels in developing Observing Systems.

The Fellow will also have the opportunity to assist with other projects in CO-OPS as time and interest allows.